

Wilderness Lodges of New Zealand

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Wilderness Lodge® Arthur's Pass

16km East of Arthur's Pass Village, Highway 73

arburspas@wildernesslodge.co.nz

+64 3318 9246



Wilderness Lodge® Lake Moeraki

90km South of Fox Glacier, Highway 6

lakemoeraki@wildernesslodge.co.nz

+64 3750 0881

Route Guide: Lake Moeraki to Queenstown/Wanaka

The journey to Queenstown is 239km (or 279km via the Kawarau Gorge) and takes 4 hours to drive comfortably. To Wanaka is 174km and takes approximately 2-3 hours. However like most roads in the wild south west of the South Island, there's a lot to see and do along the way. Accordingly, we recommend you try to allow a full day for making this journey. Note before setting out that between Lake Moeraki and Wanaka petrol is only available at Haast, Makarora & Hawea. There are no other tourist services available between these locations except for picnic areas, walking tracks and toilets provided by the Department of Conservation.

**Enjoy Your Journey, Drive Safely &
Remember to Keep Left**



Lake Moeraki to Haast Junction (32km – 30 minutes)

The road south from Lake Moeraki winds for 16 kilometres around coastal hills with stunning views of deserted beaches and glorious sunsets for those travelling at dusk. Key attractions include the coastal lookout platform at Knight's Point (6km) and two excellent short walks at Ship Creek (16km) where Hector's dolphins are often seen. From Ship Creek to Haast the road follows an easy line through wind-shorn rimu forest down to the Haast River bridge, which is the longest one lane bridge in New Zealand. Immediately after the bridge is Haast Junction, a petrol station and the Department of Conservation's outstanding World Heritage Visitor Centre. You will continue to head east to Wanaka but if you turn right at Haast Junction it is another 48km on flat sealed roads south to Jackson's Bay, the West Coast's southernmost settlement.

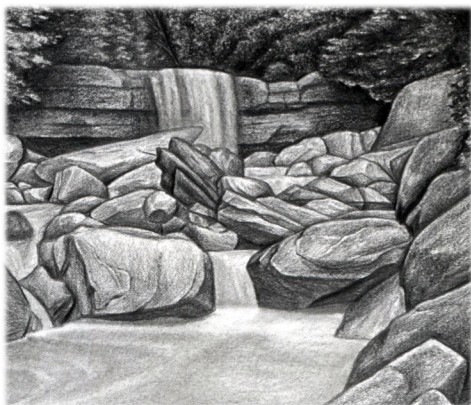


Haast Junction to Pleasant Flat (48km – 45 minutes)

At Haast Junction State Highway 6 to Wanaka turns inland towards the Southern Alps. The tiny Haast township is 3km from the junction. From here the road wends easily along the south bank of the Haast River gaining only 90m in altitude on the journey to Pleasant Flat. For much of the way it passes through lovely moss-draped rainforest with striking vistas of mountains and river and waterfalls bounding down the steep walls enclosing the valley. A 10-minute forest walk to the bank of the Haast River opposite the spectacular spillway of the Roaring Billy Falls (28km) provides an opportunity to stretch your legs. At Pleasant Flat there is a stunning view north to the glaciated summit of Mt Hooker (2652m).

Pleasant Flat to Makarora West (34km – 30 minutes)

From Pleasant Flat it is 15km to the summit of the Haast Pass. Thunder Creek Falls 4km from Pleasant Flat is another popular stopping place for a short 5 minute walk. Beyond the falls the road climbs to the Gates of Haast Bridge over the cascading the Haast River with boulders the size of houses (great photography) and then steeply for another 5km before levelling off for the final leg to the pass. At 563m Haast Pass is easily the lowest of the three road crossings of the Southern Alps. A couple of kilometres past the Gates of Haast bridge is Diana Falls, this area has undergone serious engineering to stabilise the road and contain rockfalls. The rest of the scenic drive through to Makarora West is easy. There are several picnic areas with walking tracks on this eastern side of the pass including Blue Pools Track located 8km from the pass. At Makarora West there is a café, a petrol station and Department of Conservation Visitor Centre.



Makarora West to Wanaka (65km – 50 minutes)

As you leave Makarora West you more or less say “goodbye” to forested landscapes and from here to Queenstown the dominant landscape colour is tawny-brown interrupted by the milky blue of Lakes Wanaka and Hawea. About 10km from Makarora the road leaves the Makarora Valley and winds around the steep eastern side of Lake Wanaka before crossing The Neck to neighbouring Lake Hawea (25km) and continuing south to the town of Hawea at the outlet of the lake (61km). From here it is a further 12km along State Highway 6 across the Clutha River at Albert Town to the junction of highways 6 and 84. Turn right here for Wanaka (3km) and Queenstown via the high road through the Cardrona Valley. If you do not wish to go to Wanaka and want to carry on to Queenstown by the main road veer left here and continue along SH6 to Queenstown via Luggate, Cromwell and the Kawarau River (see next section).

Either: Wanaka to Queenstown via State Highway 6 (112km – 1.5 hours).

The main road from Wanaka to Queenstown is generally flat and easy between Wanaka and Cromwell (53km) but much more winding over the next 40km as it weaves its way through the dramatic gorge of the Kawarau River. Luggate (10km) is an interesting old mining town while Cromwell is one of the major supply towns for the Otago Lakes District and centre of an important fruit growing area. The many vineyards here produce Central Otago’s renowned Pinot Noir. Those towards the Queenstown end of the Kawarau Gorge are especially picturesque.

Or: Wanaka to Queenstown via the Cardrona Valley. (71km – 1 hour)

The alternative route from Wanaka to Queenstown is shorter in distance as it climbs to an altitude of 1362m in order to cross the Crown Range. The road becomes narrow and winding about 35km from Wanaka and descends steeply on the Queenstown side of the range. While its sweeping vistas and wild terrain make it an interesting alternative route for travelling between Wanaka and Queenstown in fine weather while it is regularly closed in winter and should not be attempted in bad weather. If travelling from Wanaka follow road signs for the Cardrona Valley from the Wanaka lake-front area. The road rejoins SH6 about 20km north of Queenstown and 1 km from the turn off to Arrowtown.

*The Wilderness Lodge Lake Moeraki Team Wishes You The
Happiest Of Travels & We Hope To See You Again.*

